



# National Brownfields Assessment Pilot

## *Town of Cape Charles— County of Northampton, VA*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Between 1995 and 1996, EPA funded 76 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. EPA is funding more than 27 Pilots in 1997. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA selected the Town of Cape Charles/County of Northampton for a Brownfields Pilot. Cape Charles is located at the southern tip of Virginia's Eastern Shore on a narrow strip of land between the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The area boasts rich farmlands, productive waters, vast wetlands, and miles of unspoiled coastline. Twenty-seven percent of the 13,000 people in the area, 47% of whom are of African-American heritage, live below the poverty level.

The President's Council on Sustainable Development recently selected Cape Charles as one of four sites for a national Eco-Industrial Park demonstration project, the Cape Charles Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park, which will demonstrate advanced facilities in resource efficiency and pollution prevention. A 155-acre portion of this eco-industrial park is a redevelopment area surrounding Cape Charles Harbor on the Chesapeake Bay. The site includes a former municipal dump, dockside, railyard, and the remains of abandoned industrial operations. The site may contain hazardous substances which threaten public health and the marine environment and must be addressed before the eco-industrial park can be developed.

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



*Cape Charles-  
Northampton County, Virginia*

**Date of Award:**  
September 1995

**Amount:** \$200,000

**Site Profile:** The Pilot targets a 155-acre former dump and railyard site located on a narrow strip of land between the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean.

### Contacts:

Timothy Hayes  
Town of Cape Charles/  
County of Northampton  
(757) 678-0477  
northampton@esva.net

Tom Stolle  
U.S. EPA - Region 3  
(215) 566-3129  
stolle.tom@  
epamail.epa.gov

Visit the EPA Brownfields Website at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

## OBJECTIVES

The City's Brownfields Pilot is working to facilitate the development of the Port of Cape Charles Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park as a means of creating sustainable economic development while protecting the community's unique natural, cultural, and historic resources. Specifically, the Pilot is assessing the extent of contamination on the 155-acre former dump and railyard site and designing a remediation strategy that has enabled the development of the eco-industrial park to progress. Once the Pilot project is completed, the redeveloped brownfields will include the eco-industrial park, restored wetlands, a nature trail and environmental education facility, and a tertiary sewage treatment system.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Pilot has:

- Developed Master Plan, Comprehensive Design and Operations Standards and Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park (STIP) zoning language. Citizens reviewed and revised drafts at a Community Workshop and Celebration of Progress in December 1995;
- Facilitated the adoption by the Cape Charles Planning Commission of a new STIP zone. The Cape Charles Town council subsequently rezoned land into a new STIP zone, dedicated land for road access and approved subdivision of industrial park land; and
- Conducted a Phase I environmental assessment of 155 acres, which has been reviewed by EPA Region 3 technical staff. Planning to commence Phase II work in spring 1997.

The Pilot is:

- Formulating a complete remediation strategy for any contamination found on the site;
- Developing a feasibility study to address applicability, feasibility, and cost of applicable remediation technologies; and
- Designing an environmental management system to measure levels of performance in excess of legislative standards.

## LEVERAGING OTHER ACTIVITIES

Experience with the Cape Charles/Northampton County Pilot has been a catalyst for related activities including the following.

- The Cape Charles Town Council leased approximately 25 acres of brownfields land to the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) for use in the Park. Under this long-term lease, the IDA is responsible for any necessary environmental remediation on this area which includes 400 feet of harbor frontage, the former town dump, and the main entrance to the Park.
- Solar Building Systems, Inc., the first tenant of the Eco-Industrial Park, completed conversion of Hare Valley High School into a temporary solar factory and has hired six local employees.
- Created nine new jobs as the result of planned remediation activities and the increased demand for goods and services.
- Received an \$800,000 Rural Business Enterprise grant funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Economic Development Administration which will be used to establish infrastructure in the Industrial Park.
- Received a \$798,000 grant from the Department of the Interior to purchase land adjacent to the Park to extend the nature preserve already incorporated within the original Pilot target area.
- Received an award of \$190,000 from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to develop a coastal water quality program.
- Cooperated with the President's Council on Sustainable Development to host a national workshop on eco-industrial parks in October 1996.